WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of managing a network comprising:

transmitting a signal from a network manager to each of plural nodes to determine the availability of each node;

determining a response time of each node using the signal; and

relaying the response time of each node to a database of the network manager.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving the response time of each node in a standard format; and

reformatting the response time of each node into a flat file format prior to relaying the response time of each node to the database.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the flat file format comprises:

a start time of the response time and a sampling interval;

an end time of the sampling interval;

the response time in milliseconds; and

a node identification number

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the node identification number is an IP address.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the signal is an Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) echo request and an ICMP echo reply.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the plural nodes comprise substantially all nodes of the network.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

designating at least one of the plural nodes as one of a high priority node and a low priority node; and

transmitting the signal to each high priority node more frequently than the signal is transmitted to each low priority node.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the network manager is a Network Node Manager.

9. A computer-based system for managing a network comprising:

logic that transmits a signal from a network manager to each of plural nodes to determine the availability of each node;

logic that determines a response time of each node using the signal; and

logic that relays the response time of each node to a database of the network manager.

10. The computer-based system of claim 9, further comprising:

logic that receives the response time of each node in a standard format; and

logic that reformats the response time of each node into a flat file format prior to relaying the response time of each node to the database.

11. The computer-based system of claim 10, wherein the flat file format comprises:

a start time of the response time and a sampling interval;

an end time of the sampling interval;

the response time in milliseconds; and

a node identification number

12. The computer-based system of claim 11, wherein the node identification number is an IP address.

13. The computer-based system of claim 9, wherein the signal is an Internet Control Message Protocol (ICMP) echo request and an ICMP echo reply.

14. The computer-based system of claim 9, wherein the plural nodes comprise substantially all nodes of the network.

15. The computer-based system of claim 9, further comprising:

logic that designates at least one of the plural nodes as one of a high priority node and a low priority node; and

logic that transmits the signal to each high priority node more frequently than the signal is transmitted to each low priority node.

16. The computer-based system of claim 9, wherein the network manager is a Network Node Manager.